

CO-OPERATIVE REVIEW

SEPTEMBER
ISSUE

EDITORIAL

see pg. 3 for policy statement

Welcome to the third issue of the Community Employment Co-operative Newsletter, under its new banner, "Co-operative Review". This issue heralds a new phase. It is the first issue produced with funding from the Ministry of Employment and Training and under the new editorial committee. The editorial responsibility has been delegated to Brunswick Work Co-operative, who will review their commitment to produce the newsletter in the light of feedback from this issue and an ongoing commitment for contributions from each of the community employment co-operatives. It is important to see this newsletter as a vehicle for the co-operatives to maintain a public front, disseminate information and news, and come to terms in your co-operative with a political and social context. Numerous issues have arisen from recent workshops and conferences and we will endeavour to come to grips with these.

But, it is your responsibility to maintain the newsletter at a high standard and contributions, both news and issue-based, from your workers, directors, members, will be required regularly.

We confidently expect to produce a newsletter every six weeks, but cannot meet this aim without your support. So read on, and please let us know what you think about it.

Ed.

CO-OPERATIVE BUSINESS INITIATIVE

Victoria's Minister of Employment and Training, Brian Dixon, told delegates to a co-operatives conference in Melbourne that the government's Community Employment Co-operatives program had been substantially modified in the light of experience.

"The program has been re-designed to emphasise that the objective of establishing a co-operative business enterprise is to provide employment through profitability and innovation", Mr. Dixon said.

He said that the community employment co-operatives had received considerable community enthusiasm and support, but had found it difficult to blend the idealism with sound business practice.

"The new Community Employment Co-operatives program will ensure that would-be participants give more attention to the needs of establishing competitive business enterprises. The Ministry had funded the employment of a Co-operative Business Adviser by the Co-operative Federation of Victoria to strengthen this approach.

"The guidelines of the program require that the co-operatives be operated and maintained as efficient business operations which have good prospects of becoming self-sufficient."

Mr Dixon launched the new program at the Victorian Co-operatives State Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Co-operative Federation of Victoria at Olympic Park, Melbourne.

The Ministry produced the Guide to Managing a Community Employment Co-operative, which outlines the many

necessary steps that have to be taken in legal, financial, marketing and management areas to establish and successfully run such a Co-operative.

The Minister said that the appointment of the Adviser and publication of necessary materials would facilitate the success of the program as an employment training and small business development initiative.

THE REVISED OBJECTIVES

Revised objectives for the Community Employment Co-operatives Program:-

- establish viable new small-scale business enterprise, or employment generating modifications to existing co-operatives through new ventures;
- enhance the effective integration of the training and social resources required to provide for the long-term viability of work co-operatives and through these ventures, to;
- improve the economic well-being and social conditions of those unemployed or facing difficulties in entering or re-entering employment;
- make use of unused or under-utilised community resources;
- enhance the employability of participants.

Obviously, some of the more critical original objectives will continue to apply, including:-

- the co-operatives funded must have the potential to become self-sufficient within a necessary lead-time for their establishment and development as business ventures;
- the co-operatives funded must be operated as real business enterprises under the law;
- the co-operatives will be held strictly accountable for their usage of public monies.

Experience leads to a tightening up of conditions

In basic content, the revised guidelines are similar to their predecessors. The emphasis on viability in the relatively short term, on self-sufficiency and on the general requirements for co-operative principles and business accountability is not in itself new.

What is apparent, however, in the re-launching and the accompanying publicity and educational material, is a determination to make more explicit the contract made between co-operatives eligible for funding and the ministry. Requirements are spelt out in a number of ways - through a list of program objectives, general conditions, and special conditions - conveying a sense of "tightening up" in the light of experience.

The Ministry's press release described that experience thus...

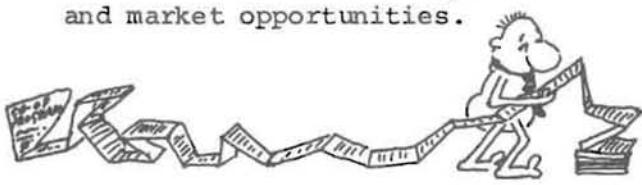
The difficulties of existing co-operatives have arisen from all or some of the following failings:-

- lack of access to business services and advice;
- under-capitalisation;
- insufficient attention to marketing;
- failure to plan ahead for the business;
- inadequate record keeping;
- poor management of money and other resources;
- down-grading of the need for advice and experience;
- misuse of time;
- lack of access to private capital;
- ignoring human factors.

The co-operatives program thus far has provided positive experience, including:-

- the involvement of unemployed people in developing small business enterprises;

- involvement of the community in constructive approaches to improving business services and employment in their communities;
- improvement in attitude, motivation, and employability of unemployed people;
- improvement in social and economic well-being of unemployed;
- pioneering new business enterprise and work situations;
- development of entrepreneurial abilities in local communities;
- identification of local problems and market opportunities.



* The guide, "Managing a Community Employment Co-operative", produced by the Ministry of Employment and Training, is available from Community Services Bookshop, 356 Collins St., Melbourne, 3000, and it costs \$4.00 (an extra .50¢ for postage if required).

EDITORIAL CONT.

A STATEMENT OF POLICY

- Review material should reflect as accurately as possible the wide range of views in the community employment co-operative movement.
- Criticism should be directed towards goals of encouraging a realistic, practical and innovative response to social problems.
- Co-operative education, principles and practice should be a principal focus.

Ed. 2.

CO-OPERATIVE ADVISOR

Welcome to Brian Greer, who has been appointed co-operative business advisor to the Community Employment Co-operatives, and commenced work on 13th July, 1981. Brian, who is 32 and single, has the relevant qualifications and experience for this position, and will be a real asset to the co-operatives funded under the co-operative development program, or those groups intending to incorporate a co-operative.

Brian has a Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Law and is a member of the Australian Society of Accountants. He was instrumental in the establishment of a work co-operative in New Zealand, Pousonby Labor Co-operative, which evolved around a group of homeless, unemployed young people, mainly Maori and Polynesian.

The Co-operative handled a labour hire service, small building contracts, motor mechanics, workshop carpentry and wood and coal merchandising. In conjunction with the work needs of the members, the co-operative tackled problems the members faced, such as housing needs.

As well as a strong background in co-operatives, Brian has also worked as an Accountant in Australia and New Zealand industry, which gives him a strong business background which will be invaluable in his new position.

Brian has spent time familiarising himself with the existing co-operatives, the Co-operative Federation and the Ministry of Employment and Training, and is already performing a valuable role. He is there to advise us, so make the best use of his experience and qualifications. He can be contacted at Co-operative Federation of Victoria, 225 Swanston Street, Melbourne, 3000. Phone: 663-1674.

REPORT ON COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT
CO-OPERATIVES WORKSHOP - BALLARAT,
23rd - 24th MAY, 1981.

About 60 participants from work co-operatives all over Victoria attended this conference at the School of Mines, Ballarat.

The aim was to bring together, groups that are incorporated or in the process of incorporation, to decide on a common strategy. One purpose for doing this, was to make sure that funds recently allocated in the State Government's Community Co-operative Development Programme, would be used to the maximum advantage of the movement. Another purpose was to continue discussions about the philosophical objectives of co-operatives, particularly in relation to growing unemployment and the internal education of members.

After the workshop was opened by the Mayor of Ballarat, David Griffiths from the Department of Employment and Training, spoke about the Co-op Development Program. David has been involved in the consultative stages of this program from the outset, so his plea for Co-ops to give it every chance to be successful, was heartfelt. He felt that the next twelve months would be crucial. If a substantial number of Co-ops were not self-sufficient or close to it by then, funds for such development would not be continued. He suggested that Work Co-operatives had to put more emphasis on getting their management in order.

The main benefits of the program were as follows -

- a) Funds for feasibility studies into proposed activities, followed if necessary by loans, grants or guarantees for such items as wages, (co-ordinator, accounting, production workers) workers' compensation and other start-up costs.
- b) Provision of a Co-operatives Advisor based at the Co-operative Federation of Victoria, who would provide much needed back-up

Rob Alliston
Maryborough

services to ensure start on the best footing. Those services will include help with accountancy systems, registration, training - in fact any problem that the developing group has.

\$610,000 has been set aside for the program in 1981/82. However, David pointed out that while this was a good start, it would only allow about eight co-ops to be funded adequately in that time.

REGISTRY REQUIREMENTS

Kerry Nolan, from the Co-op Registry, spoke next about 'how to register'. If new groups had been worried about registration, then Kerry did not allay their fears. He said that the Act required stringent observation and high penalties for those who could not carry it out. The situation would get even tighter with the introduction of the new Act in the Spring session of Parliament.

One example was, that under the new Act, groups would have to prepare two year projections of income prior to registration. This implies that if the group does not have the resources to carry out a feasibility study, then they will not be incorporated. Overall, particularly due to the demise of some very large co-ops recently, it appears that the Act has been made more complicated and not suited to the needs of small work co-ops. (Moves to amend the Act continue, however - Ed)

N.S.W. WORK CO-OPS

A most stimulating paper was presented by Michael Donovan, (the equivalent of the Advisor here). He gave a brief description of the NSW Co-ops, saying that Victoria has already learnt much from their experience: they had faced all the same problems of under capitalisation, bad book-keeping etc. However, the provision of advice had led to many of the newer groups avoiding the pitfalls of the 'pioneer' groups. A useful news sheet, plus an information service helped work co-ops prosper.

Patricia Carraro presented the view of the work co-ops themselves. She was sure that the self reliant approach was the best one and pushed for a businesslike attitude within a socially conscious framework.

Other papers presented on Saturday were -

"A Sympathetic Approach to Starting a Business." While informative, this paper by Jim Dixon found it difficult to relate to the many different stages which the co-op groups were at.

"Identifying, exploring, and developing market opportunities." Paul Littman from the Ideas Factory performed with great gusto, and made us realise that marketing need not be expensive if we get ourselves together into 'think-tank' situations.

WORLD SCENE

On Sunday, Bill Rawlinson (Co-op Federation of Victoria) gave the world and Australian perspective, showing that what we are attempting to do in Victoria, has strong links with the world movement.

PHILOSOPHY

Neville Stern of Brunswick Work Co-op cooperated with other members of that Co-op to give the most essential session of the whole workshop - an examination of the philosophy of the movement. He challenged many of the assumptions that are widely accepted or suggested, that unless the movement is philosophically sound, then with the best intentions, we could even delay the development of a sustainable society.

Mondragon Film - A video tape on the worker co-ops in northern Spain was really inspiring, pointing out that with local adaptions, large numbers could be employed by work co-ops.

Steering Group - Before closing the workshop, a steering group was appointed with representation from all registered work co-ops. To avoid transport costs, this group has already met successfully by means of a telephone hook-up linking six co-ops across the State.

"CO-OP FORUM"

THE BALLARAT CONFERENCE IN RETROSPECT

Many good things came out of the Ballarat Conference in May. Both the official agenda, with its material on business organisation and legal requirements, and the underlying agenda of "coming together", co-operating, were timely and necessary.

In this article, Neville Stern reviews not what was said, but what needs to be said and explored more fully. He suggests that there are many aspects to the social role of co-ops that tend to be undervalued in the effort to find a "solution to unemployment" in small business.

UNIQUE SPECIES, COMPLEX CHARACTER

Victorian community-based employment co-operatives are a unique species, but with a complex and somewhat confusing character. In part, this is due to the mixture of differing interest groups involved in their formation. These include: a government ministry hoping to demonstrate a response to unemployment that will appeal to business interests; local business people of the "lend a hand" turn of mind, and with a firm belief in the efficacy of strong management and the disciplines of the market-place; welfare workers looking for some developmental leverage against intractable local problems; and a Federation with a long and established tradition, and an uneasy relationship with modern large-scale co-ops that tend towards corporate big business.

The conference was no meeting of unemployed workers during the Depression Years - that isn't a criticism, but, rather, simply a note of a distinguishing historical feature. What bound a widely varying group at the School of Mines together, was a common and intense desire to "do something about unemployment", and to do it if possible through the setting up of small businesses. The desire, though, - if I can put it in so warm a term - lent a curious enhancement to the view of possible solutions, and led to certain

strong emphases in the presented material. Again, this isn't a criticism: what is meant though, is that certain problematic issues tended to be put aside.

CLIMATE OF THOUGHT

As an example of one of the strong emphases I'm referring to, one could take the focus on the responsibilities and problems of internal organisation. It was necessary, but by leaving some things unsaid, tended to give the unfortunate impression of complete individual responsibility for success or failure. Funding, in this light, was a special favour in special circumstances - it would be, as the revised program guidelines now emphasise, funding for the successful, and only for the successful.

The balance isn't to be restored, I think, by another conference concentrating on "the forces of the market". Some reflection though, is required on the climate of thought, the political climate if you like, that sits easily with the attitude of "getting yourself together on the inside assures success on the outside."

The dominant theory - and it is important to recognise it as a theory - is that market forces provide solutions to social problems. Deriving from this, are a number of deeply ingrained notions about the value of individualism, competition and independence or self-sufficiency. All these notions contribute to a fundamental confusion about the roles co-ops are supposed to play. Do they co-operate within and compete without? Are they landmarks of pure "socialism" or pure something else? Not only are issues of identity raised, but also some consideration has to be given to the realism or otherwise of trying to be self-sufficient in current market conditions.

QUESTIONS OF IDENTITY...

The "identity crisis" of Victorian work co-operatives was in evidence at Ballarat. Confusion existed as to what a worker co-operative really was (aided by the adoption in NSW of that term) and whether under Victorian law it was at all possible to have one. What was the role of community members and share-

holders - were they to direct, or simply reflect, or even more simply, detract? There was the question of not only how to manage, but of who to manage and be managed. Was a co-op a business only, for training only? The list could go on.



It's important to go beyond a naive enthusiasm which says co-ops are all of these things, for experience shows they are not - some are more one way than another. The problems are real, and are there I suggest because of the complex set of circumstances, community and government, surrounding the new work co-ops.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the difficulties co-ops experience in interpreting the role of "social ideals". This term cropped up frequently at the conference, and on many occasions was spoken of as "very nice in theory" but incidental to good management. There were also definite tendencies to confuse broader "social ideals" with narrower "social welfare" interpretations. Here it was as if the welfare workers' interest in co-operatives as a means of rehabilitation actively invited the practical rebuttal of "business and welfare don't mix."

It seemed to me then, that the terms of the business/welfare debate were all wrong, although they illustrated quite well the underlying divergence of paths that brought many people to Ballarat. At the risk of sounding, for the moment, pessimistic, it also seemed to me that there were several grounds for believing that neither side of so stereotyped a debate would succeed in achieving their solution.

...AND SURVIVAL IN NEW ROLES

To discuss social ideals in the context of co-operative work structures means a long hard look at the "market" and at work processes themselves. What it doesn't need - I suspect - are great expectations about effects co-ops are to have on unemployment. Let me expand on the questions of the market and of work processes.

It is unrealistic to expect the current market to absorb a significant proportion of unemployment through small and independent businesses. This really didn't come through at the conference - by some sleight of hand, brought about by the desires I spoke of earlier, the dismal figures for the predicted number of "survivors" in NSW had their message softened. The experience of such incredibly hard-working co-ops such as Maryborough or Brunswick tells of the effort required, the sheer resources required to secure only a few jobs for particular kinds of people. The issues of simple survival predominate over rosier hopes of short-term employment generation.

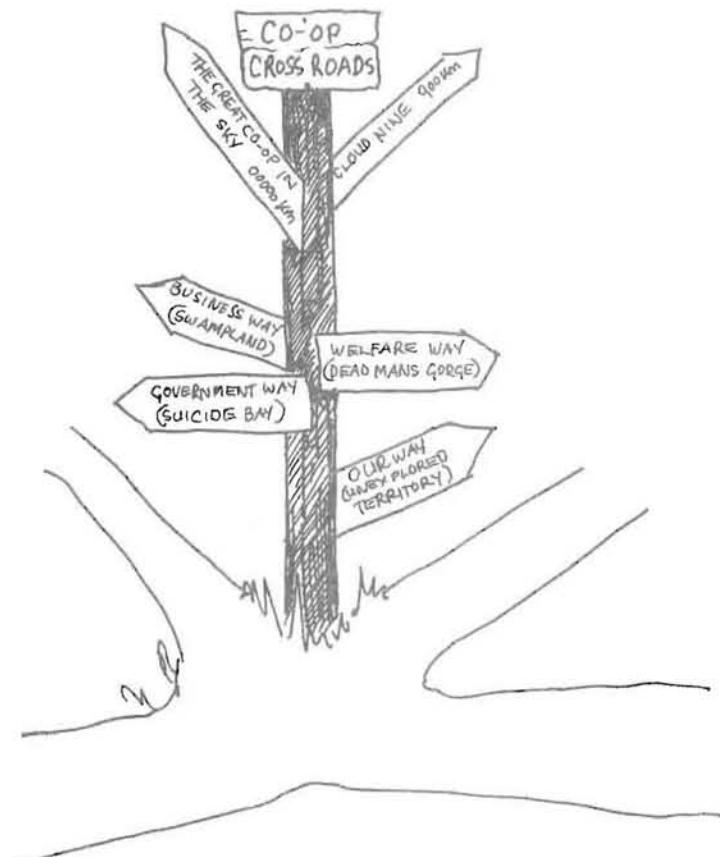
Now, this need not be the gloomy disaster it could be, nor does it necessarily detract from the potential usefulness of the co-op program. What a more realistic appraisal could lead to, would be a certain pioneering role for the - relatively few - survivors.

That pioneering role, I suggest, has to do with searching out, demonstrating and establishing work areas that are genuinely socially useful, and in using work processes that are genuinely distributive of the returns they generate. At present, particularly by overseas standards, such areas of work are tremendously under-valued and unrecognised. The very earnestness of a desire for solutions clouds the issue, makes one grab for jobs at any cost, and in so doing, overlooks the wider consequences of an essentially competitive struggle. There is a great deal of material around on new forms of socially useful work; what most of it suggests that there may be built into unprincipled private enterprise seeds of the very problems you set out to solve. In social terms - which were the terms that drew people to Ballarat in May - opting simply and unqualifiedly for "the market" could in fact lead one by the nose, so to speak, in a full circle. One would be no better off after a substantial program of assistance than before, in these circumstances.

REALISM

In short, what the conference didn't bring out - despite many speaker's grave warnings and statements of "you've got to be practical, realistic or go down" - was realism itself, about how practically to put the current program to best use. It didn't bring out the possibility that certain kinds of "social ideals" may ensure the continued survival, success even, of well-directed enterprises. In fact, the concept of socially useful work was scarcely discussed, despite its long term promise of being eventually (almost) the only kind of work left to be done.

Let it not be assumed that I thought the conference misguided and a waste of time, it certainly was not. It's full value for co-ops though, in terms of survival, identity and practicable aims, depends on being able to open up through future workshops and gatherings the areas which it only began to explore. It points really to an educational need, going far beyond lectures on book-keeping. It would be a pity to ignore that sign post.



Here, Mark Considine from Brunswick, reviews some of the ideas from Australia and elsewhere which present critical views of the role of co-ops.

CO-OPERATIVES AND SOCIAL CHANGE?

There is now a familiar argument which shows with painful clarity, that co-operatives do not provide a strategy for countering the key problems of our social and economic system. Instead, they can be seen either as a minor irritation or as an integral part of the functioning of the dominant system. The central claims of this argument run as follows -

1. Because there is still a clear division between owners (members) and workers (employees), co-operatives are unable to break from mainstream systems of production and control.
2. Because the environment in which co-operatives operate is dominated by a very large and dense mass of firms who function according to capitalist imperatives, there is no 'space' for groups to pursue different objectives.
3. Very often, the only viable areas for co-operatives to operate are those to do with 'cleaning up capitalism' - the repair, renovation and recycling sectors. Obviously, this can assist the dominant sector of the economy in its efforts to make itself legitimate in the eyes of government and consumers. In this context, some firms overseas have actually encouraged groups to form to perform these functions.
4. Another developing area of co-operative work is the service sector where governments here and overseas favour a devolution of many welfare functions back to the private sphere. This means that co-operatives who take on services for the handicapped, aged and the unemployed, assist conservative governments' in their efforts to make these jobs the responsibility of local groups, voluntary groups and private organisations - in fact, anyone but government.

5. Often co-operatives use up enormous energy at the personal level and quite often, the people involved are those who might otherwise be engaged in agitating and organising for change inside the companies and institutions of the dominant sector.

6. Because they need to become proficient at all the skills and methods of the small business operator, co-operative members may be re-socialised out of their dissatisfied and critical attitude to the dominant system of production, and into the populist liberalism which is typical of small holders the world over. This is not so much being bought off, as brought in.

A LONG LIST

Without too great a reliance on exaggeration, it would be easy to extend this kind of list to a point where no case could seem to justify the use of co-operatives as agencies for social change. Counter arguments which emphasise meeting needs outside the dominant market or developing products overlooked by ordinary companies because of low profitability or specialist production, all founder on the same rocks. Once we accept co-operatives as business organisations, we concede all claims that our purpose is social change of any major kind.

Is there an alternative? There is if we are prepared to adjust our expectations and those of the potential workforce who see co-operatives as a route to a job. What we need to do is abandon most of our efforts to operate co-operatives as small businesses. The reason is simple, even obvious. The objectives of business are concerned with the manufacture of products or services. Labour is no more than a means to that end. Consumers must be defined in terms of that end. As a consequence, the political, social and ideological components of work (who gets what tasks and why) follow behind everything else. What we need to do is reverse this relationship so that achievement of political and ideological changes take priority over business activity. Obviously, this puts a lot of strain on funds - but then if we stop trying to offer people jobs, we can specify more clearly what skills

and opportunities we are offering and why.

This focus helps resolve one of our greatest dilemmas. What to do with the membership of co-operatives - the shareholders.

At present, they are little more than patrons. Business objectives require nothing from this group and business production given them nothing more than access to products. They need a redefined co-operative strategy in which production of things is made but one link in a chain of co-operative activity centered on politicising communities and creating powerful local organisations. This focus could provide a means of both running a co-op and working for change.

CO-OPERATIVE ROUND UP

LOCH ARD

Loch Ard's initial Craft Outlet for locally made craft goods produced by co-op members has been operating for over 20 months, having expanded its range of goods and refined the standard of quality. As an extension, we are seeking a regular outlet in Melbourne for some lines we feel are particularly saleable, produced by members who wish to substantially expand their production. In particular, we have a range of excellently designed and crafted wooden toys finished in clear and primary colours and some loveable stuffed animals made from lambskin. We would be pleased to hear of any possible outlet for these goods, or other local craft.

LOCH ARD'S BIG EXPANSION IS INTO RECYCLING

In March this year, we commenced operation of a recycling centre in conjunction with the Warnambool City Council on a site adjacent to their tip entrance. On this site, paper, bottles, unwanted goods and anything resaleable are collected, sorted and packed for resale, principally to industry for re-use.

In our first 18 weeks of operation, over 20 tonnes of paper, 80,000 beer bottles, 2,300 soft drink bottles were collected, along with smaller quantities of other goods. This operation has proved a 'near perfect' job creation venture, utilising what was literally waste destined for burial. Its operation reduced space utilised in disposing of rubbish and is obviously environmentally sound.

CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION

At the Co-operative Federation's A.G.M. and State Conference, Tony Gill was elected to the State Council of the Federation, but unfortunately Max Llewelyn did not obtain enough votes for election.

WORCO

Recyclatron has commenced. Hawthorn's answer to Reverse Garbage Truck. They will be collecting waste industrial material and recycling it for art and craft in schools and for other interested groups. PLUS Furniture reclamation and restoration by two people who are saving old and broken furniture from the scrap heap and restoring such items for resale. For contact, ring (03) 819-4971 or 49 William St, Hawthorn, 3122.

MARYBOROUGH BOOTSTRAP

Our set-up is a cottage which is now surrounded by light industry. The area is being developed by the local Council. In the last twelve months, we have lost half our bush setting but gained some neighbours.

During July, we've been making up clothing orders (mostly suede); some of these orders resulted from visiting our shops in Canberra during the Conference. Most of our selling is done by Mail Order but nothing seems to beat a personal visit.

Look out for our Chamits in Myer Melbourne Hardware, also chamois hand mops, packaged in bright yellow and black. Georges Hostess Store continue to give us repeat orders. In the

suburbs, close to the City, we are selling to Thingummybob (Toorak Village), Distelfink (Hawthorn) and Tulip Gallery (South Melbourne). Worco are going to try our gift lines on their stand at the next Hawthorn market. Loch Ard have been selling our products for over twelve months.

We went well with our stand at the Woolcraft section of the Melbourne Sheep Show in July. Following a quiet month in June, the Cash Sales at the Show gave us some ready cash.

Two of our members have died. Does this mean their shares are forfeited?

We're planning to send someone to the Workers' Workshop in Sydney in October.

We have turned a loss of \$5,500 last financial year, into a profit this year. This includes converting some of our voluntary labour into fully paid labour. We still have approximately 40% of our labour voluntary (this includes Directors' input). On the other side, we have paid out over \$40,000 in wages since we started two and a half years ago.

We have a weekly Workers' Meeting during working hours and a fortnightly Directors' meeting after hours. David visited us in July and Brian in August. Both visits were appreciated. We are in the middle of discussing objectives for the next two years. This will provide a starting foundation for the Business Plan, which no doubt a lot of other co-ops likewise are planning at this stage.

We are looking forward to a busy period as Spring, school holidays, Summer and Christmas approach.

BRUNSWICK WORK CO-OPERATIVE

The good news is the purchase of a newer model printing press and a bromide camera. These will improve the efficiency of our silkscreen and offset printing and open up the way for more work, particularly with the bromide camera.

The not so exciting news, is the continued drag of trying to prepare a business plan. We hope we have found the answer with some help from a book titled, "How to Organise and Operate a Small Business in Australia", by John W. English. The outline we decided on is -

Aim: Reflect on 1980/81 financial year and plan directions for 1981/82 and how to achieve maximum viability.

Summary of 1980/81: financial statements; major achievements; problems and how tackled; staffing and adequacy.

Objectives for 1981/82:

Direction of Co-operative.

Maximum viability with existing resources.

What new resources are needed to meet the aims and directions.

Staffing requirements.

Define Market.

How to Increase share of Market?

Financial Statements:

Income/expenditure

Cash flows

We are currently working through this plan and hope it will produce the required results.



COMING EVENTS

1. N.S.W. WORKER CO-OPERATIVES WORKSHOP

This workshop is aimed specifically at workers in co-operatives, and emerged from the Working Together Conference in Canberra, which was seen by the workers as too academic/manager oriented. Definite agenda items are -

- a) Education within your co-operative;
- b) basic accounting;
- c) role of worker directors
- d) designing your workshop.

Other topics for possible inclusion are -

- a) Worker/manager relationships;
- b) worker rights and obligations;
- c) benefits for workers (eg. food co-ops etc.).

Date: October 17th & 18th.

Venue: Sydney.

Cost: \$10.00

Accommodation: Some will be provided by workers from Sydney Co-ops.

Participants: Members of worker co-operatives, both young and inexperienced, as well as experienced members. Workers from Victoria and elsewhere are invited.

Additional: For those interested, visits to Sydney Co-ops can be arranged either before or after the workshop. Contact Peter Arundel, Association of Worker Co-operatives of N.S.W., C/- Community Liaison Bureau, Box K718, Haymarket, NSW, 2000.

2. WORKSHOPS

Victorian Community Employment Co-Operatives

A workshop will be held on a weekend in mid-November. The workshop is being organised and further details will be available soon. Watch this space for more information.

3. VIDEO

A proposal is being prepared by the Education and Training Sub-Committee of the Steering Group in conjunction with the Transition Resource Unit and Open Channel.

The focus of the video will be -

- co-operative principles and practices;
- issues existing co-operatives are facing;
- education in decision-making processes in co-operatives;
- range of co-operatives across Victoria and services;
- positive/negative aspects of co-operatives.

The video is intended for -

- existing co-operatives
- schools
- community groups (E.P.U.Y. etc.)
- co-operative federation
- intending co-operatives
- T.A.F.E. Colleges

The proposal is in its early stages and all co-operatives will be contacted regarding this in the near future. The sub-committee will report back to the Steering Committee on 21st September, 1981.

NEW CO-OPERATIVE GROUP FORMED

As a result of the Ballarat Conference the Community Employment Co-operatives decided to form an executive type group to coordinate policy that would ensure the best interests of these co-operatives were furthered. The group has met several times and has developed a charter under which it will operate. This charter is:-

The Community Employment Co-operative group of the Victorian Co-operative Federation consists of all those Victorian Co-operative members who are:-

1. Registered with the Registrar of Co-operatives
2. Members of the Victorian Co-operative Federation
3. Incorporated to provide employment.

A Steering Committee of the group is composed of one member of each of the above Co-operatives elected by their respective Co-operative boards.

Decisions are made on the basis of

one member one vote.

Steering Committee Meetings are held on a monthly basis.

The function of the Steering Committee is:-

in a Co-operative manner to set policy directions for the Group and to ensure that these policies are acted upon.

to represent the Co-operative interests of Group Co-operatives to Co-operative Federation, Government, Opposition, Trade Unions and other relevant organisations.

to set out policy and direction for the Group and to communicate this policy to:-

- the Co-operative Adviser
- the Victorian Co-operative Council Representative
- Work Co-operative Groups members on the Government Funding Committee

to arrange useful Co-operative education functions for Co-operative members, Directors, Supporters and interested persons through -

- seminars
- workshops
- conferences
- newsletter.

to arrange publication and dissemination of Co-operative Newsletter.

to service the needs of member Co-operatives in whatever way possible.

to foster the growth and support of Victorian Community Employment Co-operatives through regular meetings.

to foster Co-operative activities between Community Employment Co-operatives and traditional Co-operatives.

to promote Co-operation between Community Employment Co-operatives in Victoria.

If you have any comments on this, could you pass them on to the group for discussion.

At the last meeting, sub-committees were formed to co-ordinate the following issues:-

1. education and training -
 - proposal for an education and training person
 - video
 - workshops
 - brochure for information
 - deputations
2. public relations
3. newsletter.

WHO'S BEEN FUNDED?

That's not an easy question to answer, but information to date is:-

\$

Boxhill Workforce Co-op	46,090
Lochard Co-op	21,685
Brunswick Work Co-op	39,580
Maryborough P.A.A.R.C.	11,800
Maryborough Bootstrap (includes \$15,000 loan)	15,950
Co-op Federation of Victoria (newsletter, workshop, admin. costs, co-op adviser, education & training)	43,000
	<u>199,105</u>

The question is, how much of this amount came out of the 1980/81 financial year, and how much has come out of the 1981/82 budget?

CO-OPERATIVE PROFILES

BALLARAT

feasibility studies into potential employment creation businesses in the areas of:-

- reforestation
- craft market
- specialised clothing manufacture
- laundry and steam cleaning service

Address: 32 Lydiard St., Ballarat.
(053) 316541

Decisions are made on the basis of one member one vote.

Steering Committee Meetings are held on a monthly basis.

The function of the Steering Committee is:-

in a Co-operative manner to set policy directions for the Group and to ensure that these policies are acted upon.

to represent the Co-operative interests of Group Co-operatives to Co-operative Federation, Government, Opposition, Trade Unions and other relevant organisations.

to set out policy and direction for the Group and to communicate this policy to:-

- the Co-operative Adviser
- the Victorian Co-operative Council Representative
- Work Co-operative Groups members on the Government Funding Committee

to arrange useful Co-operative education functions for Co-operative members, Directors, Supporters and interested persons through -

- seminars
- workshops
- conferences
- newsletter.

to arrange publication and dissemination of Co-operative Newsletter.

to service the needs of member Co-operatives in whatever way possible.

to foster the growth and support of Victorian Community Employment Co-operatives through regular meetings.

to foster Co-operative activities between Community Employment Co-operatives and traditional Co-operatives.

to promote Co-operation between Community Employment Co-operatives in Victoria.

If you have any comments on this, could you pass them on to the group for discussion.

At the last meeting, sub-committees were formed to co-ordinate the following issues:-

1. education and training -
 - proposal for an education and training person
 - video
 - workshops
 - brochure for information
 - deputations
2. public relations
3. newsletter.

WHO'S BEEN FUNDED?

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BOX HILL

manufacturing:-

- Bar-B-Que grates
- large display boards
- small notice boards

training in associated areas.

Address: 40 Clarice St., Box Hill
(03) 888045

BRUNSWICK

offset and silkscreen printing
food co-operative
actors and 'riters collective

Address: 173 Albion St., Brunswick
(03) 3833087

DANDENONG

recycling and training in

- woodwork
- welding
- motor mechanics
- office work
- art and craft

Address: 2-4 Hilton St., Dandenong
(03) 7921006

DO-IT

home/garden maintenance service
cane and leather accessories
training

Phone: (03) 8427436

BOOTSTRAP

manufacturing:-

- chamois leather
- cleaning and gift items
- chamois and suede garments

Address: 36 Goldsmith St, Maryborough
(054) 612050

P.A.A.R.C.

producing:-

- bikes, trailers, tricycles
- recycling
- small farm and garden services

Address: 165 Railway St, Maryborough
(054) 613151.

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WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE MINISTRY
OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING.